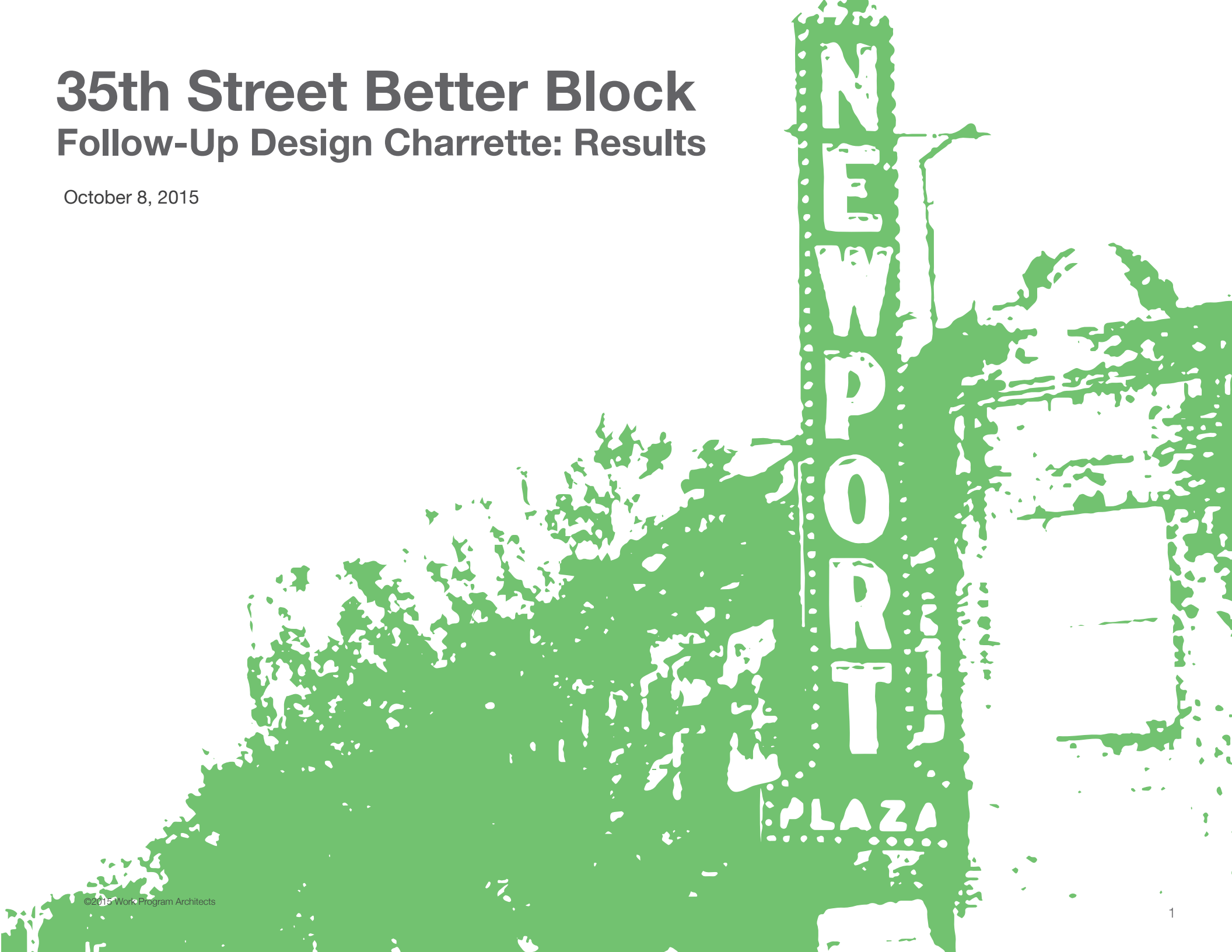


# 35th Street Better Block

## Follow-Up Design Charrette: Results

October 8, 2015





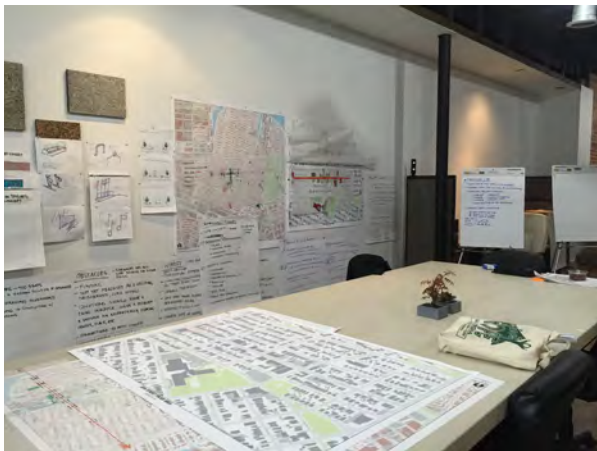
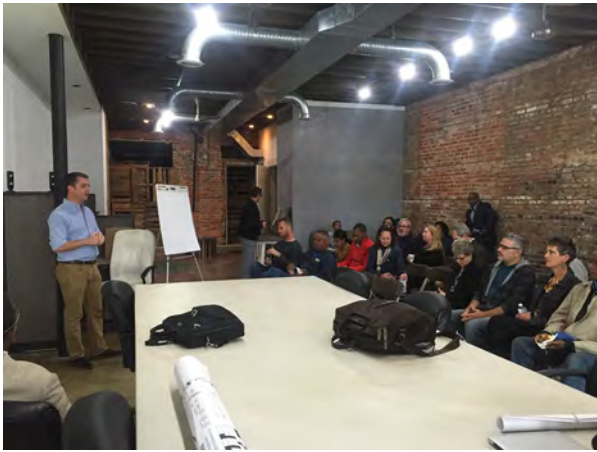
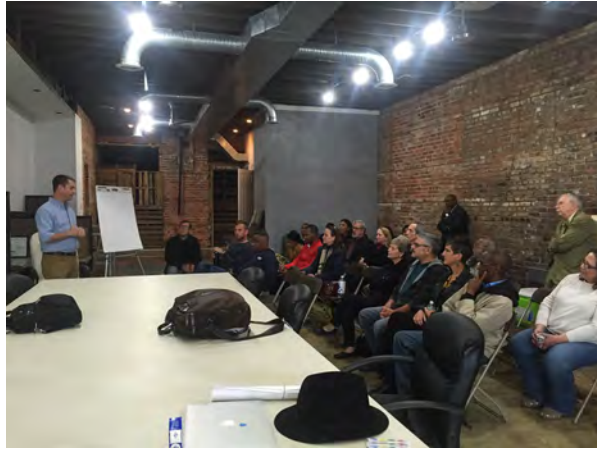
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page 3	Process Overview
Page 4	35th Street Corridor Context
Page 6	Strengths of 35th Street
Page 10	Weaknesses of 35th Street
Page 14	Aspirations for 35th Street
Page 15	Emerging Themes
Page 16	Strategies & Infrastructure Options
Page 17	Charrette Plan & Intersection Plans
Page 18	Three Street Section Options
Page 19	Better Block & Norfolk First Program
Page 20	Next Steps
Page 21	Proposed Streetscape Sketches

*Prepared for the City of Norfolk by* Work Program Architects

Raymond L. Gindroz







# Process Overview

The Planning Process was initiated by the City to obtain input for determining the best use of a \$200,000 budget from the Neighborhood and Commercial District Capital Program. It also included finding ways of coordinating this work with other programs, such as the Better Block Grant Program and other economic incentives. A public charrette was held to gather community input and begin to identify a strategy for the most effective use of the \$200,000.

**April 25, 2015**

## **Understanding and Evaluation**

20 Participants identified the strengths and weaknesses of the area as well as sharing their aspirations for the future. The WPA and City team presented some ideas in response to the input from the community, including modifications to the street pattern, pedestrian improvements and landscape recommendations. These were then evaluated by participants.

Next Steps include proceeding with more detailed design and addressing some of the longer term concerns of the community.



# Pre-Charrette Study

The North-South connections throughout Norfolk are particularly strong. Unfortunately, in the case of the 35th Street Corridor, this means that most traffic travels past it, rather than through it.

The 35th Street Corridor must provide an easily identified and compelling reason for traffic to divert from the North-South routes to the commercial concentration between Colonial Avenue and Gosnold Avenue.







# Strengths of 35th Street

Each participant placed three green dots on the three best places in the focus area and the overall context area. These results are summarized on the following pages. They then produced written lists to identify the strengths of the corridor on which a revitalizing effort could be built, including:

- Collection of small retail
- Age of buildings
- Potential
- Location of neighborhood (close to Downtown, Zoo, Universities, Colley Ave.)
- The Venue-bright colors
- Desire to bring the neighborhood back
- Neighborhood Village (potential)
- Connections – woven into the fabric
- Bookends
- Potential to attract specialty shops
- Park Place School
- Proximity to Riverview, Colonial Place, Larchmont—could be the central hub
- Potential for theater to be like Woolworth's in Asheville or Chelsea Market in NYC
- Opportunity for unique specialty shops
- Younger people now frequent the Venue
- Active Civic League
- Neighborhood Mix/diversity (buildings, demographics)
- Walkability in the neighborhood
- Good bones
- Newport Sign
- History—feels like is was a little downtown
- Two anchors for retail – Rosna Theater and Newport Theater
- YMCA

## 35th Street Assets

Participants listed the existing assets of the 35th Street Corridor which could best anchor the future improvements, including:

- Presence of quality residential
- Croaker Spot (will also need to reach outside area)
- Parking available at the school and the community center
- Historic buildings
- Scale of buildings
- The Venue at 35th
- Granny's
- YMCA/New School
- Handsome Biscuit & Toast
- New Apartments (market-rate) on 35th







### 35th STREET FOCUS AREA - STRENGTHS

NORFOLK, VA

0 50 100 200 300 400 Feet

1 inch = 200 feet

- 1. Commercial Corridor
- 2. Granny's
- 3. The Venue on 35th

- 4. Mosque
- 5. Croaker Spot
- 6. Public Parking

- 7. Renovated Commercial
- 8. Historical Buildings
- 9. Public Art

- 10. Quality Residential
- 11. Open Space
- 12. Available Parking

# Strengths of 35th Street

Results of community input session



## 35th STREET CONTEXT AREA - STRENGTHS

NORFOLK, VA



# Strengths of 35th Street

Interpretation of community input session



Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, TomTom, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), swisstopo, MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

## 35th STREET CONTEXT AREA - STRENGTHS

NORFOLK, VA

0 100 200 400 600 800 Feet  
1 inch = 400 feet

- 1. Commercial Corridor
- 2. Hardware Store
- 3. Available Parking

- 4. Open Space
- 5. Open Space
- 6. Redeveloped Area

- 7. Lafayette Park/Virginia Zoo

# Weaknesses of 35th Street

Each participant placed three red dots on the three worst places in the focus area and the overall context area. These results are summarized on the following pages. They then produced written lists of the key problems and weaknesses of the area that needed to be corrected in order to revitalize the area, including:

- Apartments behind the school at Omohundro Avenue
- Boys & Girls Club at 26th Street needs a tenant
- Perception affects the brand
- The Virginian Pilot always identifies crimes as taking place in
- “Park Place” (starting to use street names instead)
- “Crossing the tracks”
- Not many people supporting businesses on 35th Street
- Traffic – N & S routes not travelled
- Chinese restaurant at Colley and 35th Street
- Old Rite-Aid
- Codes not being enforced
- Exposed AC units in the windows
- Old chain link fences
- Graffiti (especially on the façade of the Chinese restaurant)
- Negative perception/exaggeration of negativity
- Lack of branding/identity
- Not a core group of patrons actively supporting the businesses
- Not enough businesses focused on daily needs
- Zoning restrictions
- Speeding traffic (high traffic counts are desired as well as a walkable environment)
- Pawn shop and churches at the corner of Colonial and 35th

## 35th Street Assets

Participants listed the key obstacles encountered in the area that needed to be corrected in order to revitalize the area, including:

- Sidewalks are not wide enough for outdoor dining
- Funding
- Not yet perceived as a welcoming neighborhood; curb appeal
- Solutions should have a dual purpose: solve a problem & provide an aesthetically pleasing object, place, etc.
- Connected to main streets
- Perception
- Wide/hostile road
- Lack of activity or evidence of activity
- Nothing makes you want to stop
- Distance/visibility from main arteries (does not look commercial)
- Lack of neighborhood-servicing businesses
- Businesses have not been updated
- Heavy institutional uses
- Lack of focus on the 35th Street corridor
- Money (the grant is a start)
- Aesthetics/appeal/walkability issue
- Needs the image of a neighborhood that is a whole place







### 35th STREET FOCUS AREA - WEAKNESSES

NORFOLK, VA

0 50 100 200 300 400 Feet  
1 inch = 200 feet

- |                               |  |                               |
|-------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| 1. Vacant Building            | 4. Land Use questioned by participants | 7. Problems with some tenants |
| 2. Vacant Building            | 5. Vacant Building                     |                               |
| 3. Problems with some tenants | 6. Problems with some tenants          |                               |

# Weaknesses of 35th Street

Results of community input session





# Weaknesses of 35th Street

Interpretation of community input session



## 35th STREET CONTEXT AREA - WEAKNESSES

NORFOLK, VA

0 100 200 400 600 800 Feet

1 inch = 400 feet

- |                           |   |                               |
|---------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| 1. Dilapidated Restaurant | 4. Vacant Building & Lot                    | 7. Problems with some tenants |
| 2. Vacant Rosna Theater   | 5. Land Use questioned by some participants | 8. Problems with some tenants |
| 3. Vacant Retail          | 6. Problems with some tenants               |                               |

# Aspirations for 35th Street

Participants listed the aspirations for the area toward which future efforts should be directed, including:

- 35th Street to become like a mini U Street corridor in D.C.
- Historic Warehouse District
- Both a destination and a community market place
- Eateries with outdoor seating
- Reduce the number of storefront churches
- Decorative signs and lighting
- Keep parking in mind – solve in a smart way that does not incur a large city cost
- Visually pleasing
- People & Patrons
- Activate the green dot areas
- Economic diversity
- A positive image
- Realize its potential as a draw
- Food/entertainment district
- Moratorium on additional subsidized housing
- Restore the historical churches





# Emerging Themes

From these lists, a set of common themes emerged:

## 1. Branding and Implementation

Branding the street as a destination as well as a neighborhood is very important to the community. Establishing 35th Street as the business and cultural hub of Park Place is the first step towards being acknowledged as a regional treasure. Calling attention to, and further developing, the musical, culinary, artistic, and cultural identities of the existing and forthcoming businesses within the 35th Street Corridor will be necessary in order to draw visitors off of the nearby North-South routes and into the local establishments.

Frequently mentioned ideas for achieving this were:

- “Live on 35th Street” Brand

- Flags

- Painting the street

- Gateways

- Markers (Wayfinding) on sign tops

## 2. Traffic Calming

The wide cartway of 35th Street is more effective as a shortcut between Granby Street and Colley Avenue than as a thriving business street. It encourages high traffic speeds which cause drivers to pay less attention to businesses that they’re passing by as well as making the street uncomfortable for pedestrians. Calming traffic is critical to reinventing the 35th Street Corridor as a pedestrian-friendly business and cultural center for the Park Place neighborhood and the Hampton Roads region.

Potential Traffic Calming measures include:

- Gateways

- Crosswalks

- Bump-outs

- Parklets

- Bike Racks

- Table-top crosswalk

- Custom decorative concrete planter boxes



# Strategies

By applying the lists of Strengths, Weaknesses, and Aspirations to the list of Emerging Themes, a set of Strategies were developed to best counter the negative aspects of the corridor while enhancing the existing positive aspects, including:

## IDENTITY

- Gateways to connect to arteries – create image of the place, let people know they have arrived, lead people to the commercial district
  - Two scales:
    - 1) Gateways - Colley & 35th and Granby and 35th  
At intersection or the middle of the block
    - 2) Markers – Granby, Llewellyn, Colonial, Colley, Hampton)
- Flags on houses and businesses along the street, flowers, front yard improvements
  - Atlanta example along the beltway (everyone has neighborhood flags; competition between neighborhoods)

## TRAFFIC CALMING

- Bike Lane replacing central turning lane
- Angled Parking in center of street
- Look at perpendicular parking solution
- Parklets on North side of 35th Street for café seating (for Croaker Spot and other eateries)
- Primary Focus areas:
  - Start just East of Colonial Avenue
  - Finish just West of Gosnold Avenue
- Don't make 35th street a detour street for other roadway work

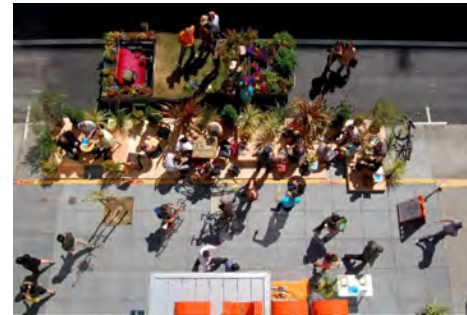
## ACCESS

- Use both 35th Street and surrounding blocks for parking
- Community Center – program change from being a social services location to a neighborhood anchor for all citizens with parking

# Infrastructure Options

Participants listed structural and infrastructural options that they felt would meet their needs and help achieve their collective aspirations for the corridor, including:

- Gateways and Markers (double-duty as traffic calming)
- Middle turn lane
- Bike Lanes – where should they be placed?
- Traffic calming – coordination with other road projects in the city
- Parking bump-outs
- Rosna Theater has 700 seats -- will need a parking solution if renovated
- Cooperative parking agreements
- Church parking is conflicting with business parking



**parklet seating**

Photo by Colleen McHugh  
100resilientcities.org



**bike lane**

Photo by NYDOT



**existing sidewalk landscaping**

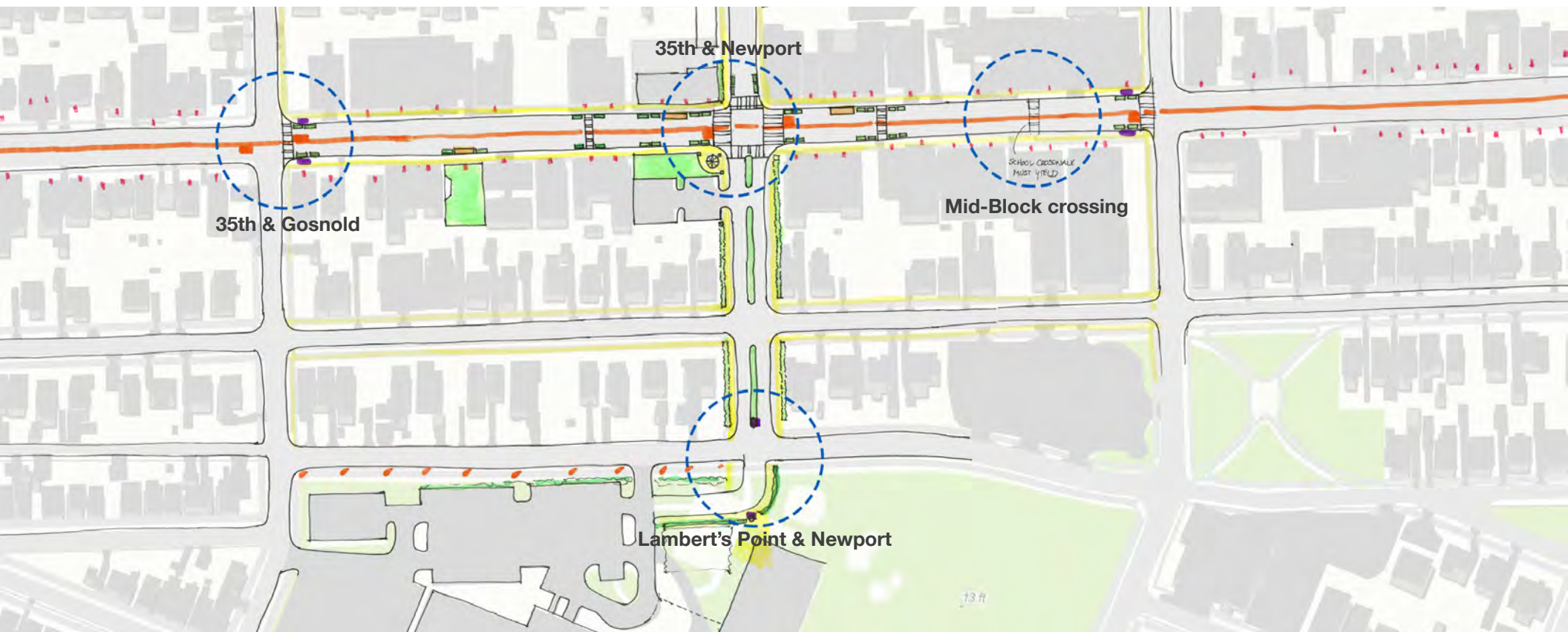
Photo by Work Program Architects



**intersection medallion**

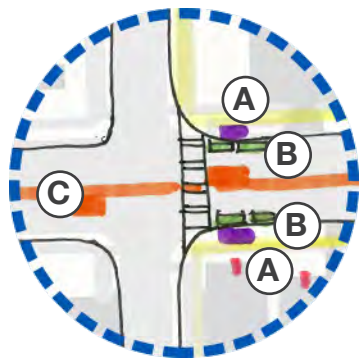
Image by Park Place Business Association





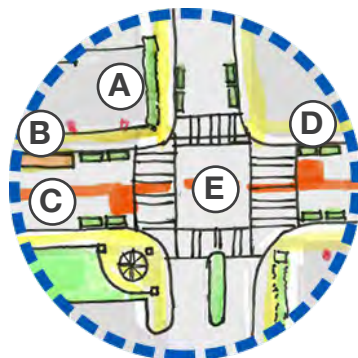
## 35th Street Charrette Plan

During the Charrette, a conceptual plan was sketched to illustrate a possible set of moves which satisfy the goals and intent of the previously identified strategies.



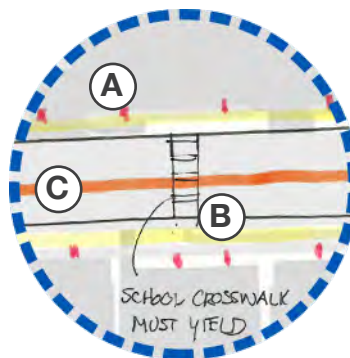
**35th & Gosnold**

A) Gateways, B) bump-outs,  
C) bike lane



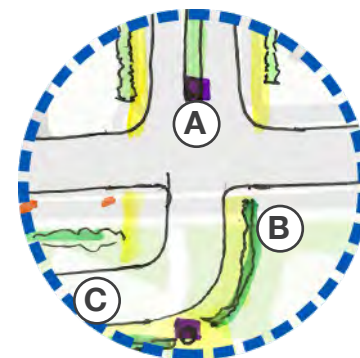
**35th & Newport**

A) Landscaping, B) parklets,  
C) bike lane, D) bump-outs,  
E) intersection medallion



**Mid-Block crossing**

A) Flags and banners,  
B) pedestrian crossings, C) bike lane

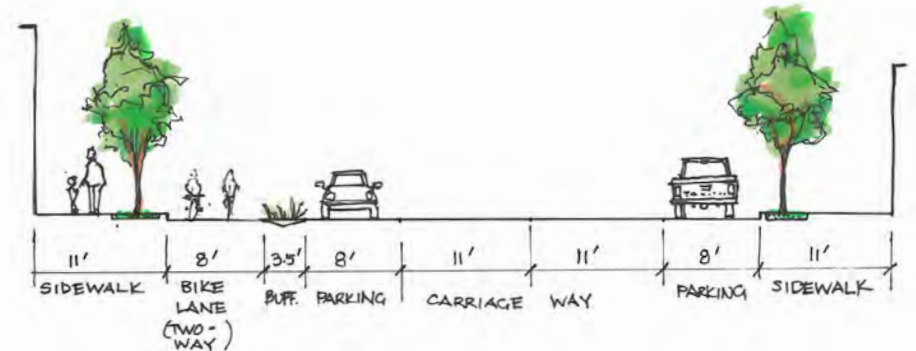


**Lambert's Point & Newport**

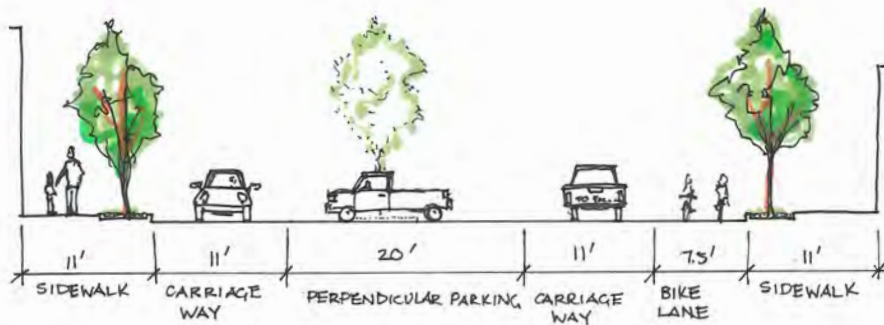
A) Gateways, B) landscaping,  
C) additional parking

# Street Sections

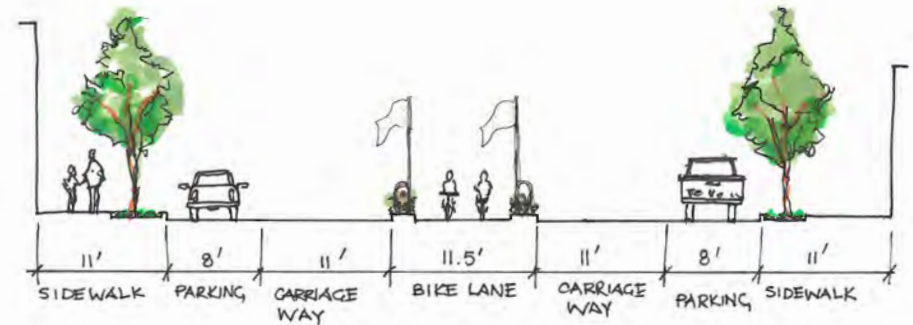
During the Charrette, three options for street sections were sketched to illustrate various methods for incorporating community amenities with a desirable streetscape and traffic calming measures.



**Street Section 1: bike lane on one side**



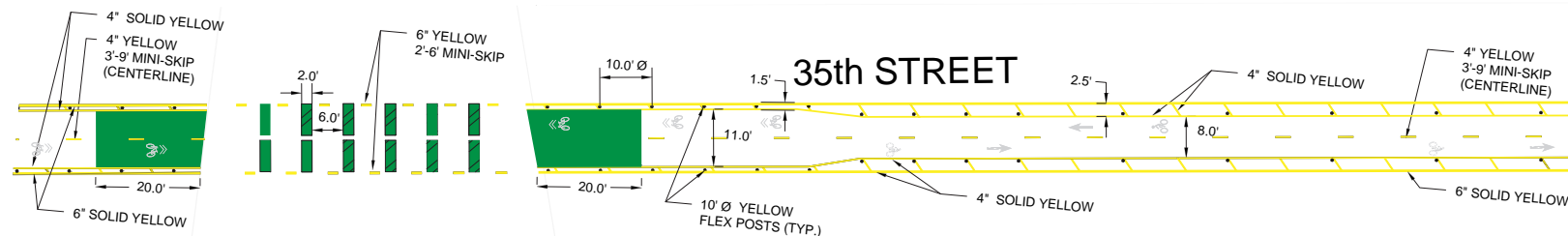
**Street Section 2: perpendicular parking in center; bike lane to one side**



**Street Section 3: protected bike lane in center**

## 35th Street Central Bike/Ped Lane:

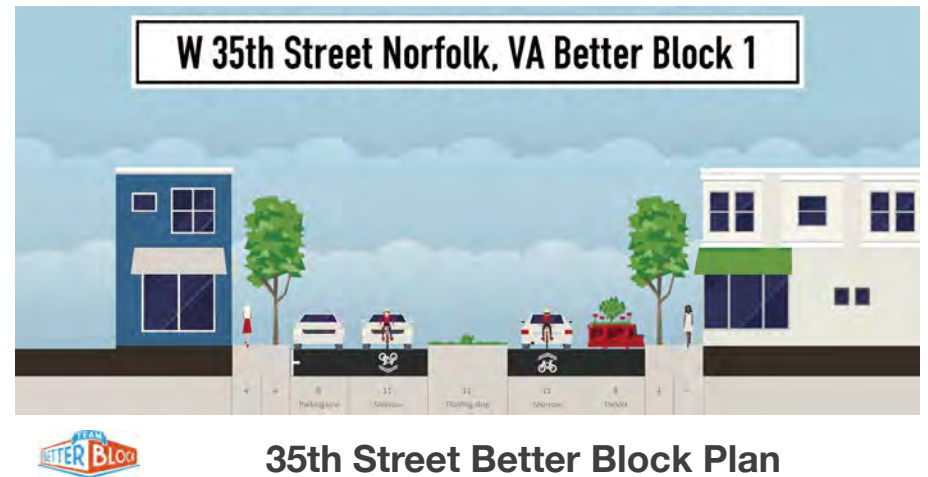
The City of Norfolk Department of Public Works has completed engineered drawings for a central bicycle and pedestrian lane on 35th street. It includes some narrowing of the vehicular travel lanes at intersections in order to calm traffic and to create better safety islands.





## Better Block

This process was preceded by a Better Block Workshop during the spring. That process tested a series of ideas for improving the area including streetscapes, pop up shops and programmed activities. Participants generally felt that the Better Block Event was successful and helped the community visualize a future for the area.



## Better Block Grant:

The first Better Block Grant will be awarded to a business for improvements to a building.

## Norfolk First Program:

The Department of Economic Development has initiated a program that will be used to help start and grow Norfolk businesses.



# Participant's Responses and Next Steps

## 1. **Design of the Crosswalks:**

The Park Place Business Association has proposed a series of art projects including painting graphic images on the pavement to support the “Brand”. These should be designed by a graphic artists on the WPA team in order to be correctly coordinated with the other elements.

2. **Design of Planters:** The planters are intended to carry shrubs that match the existing ones on Newport. How deep do they need to be? How will irrigation be handled? A logo or marketing image should be imprinted on the ends and sides of the planters to further reinforce the Brand.

3. **Bike Lane:** The lane itself is straight forward, but how will crosswalks and turning movements across it be handled? What devices can be used to protect the bike lane and indicate the location of crosswalks?

4. **Markers and Gateways:** This is a specialized design that needs to be created before they can be fabricated.



“Live on 35th” gateway sign



**Colley Ave. Gateway**

Photo by Google

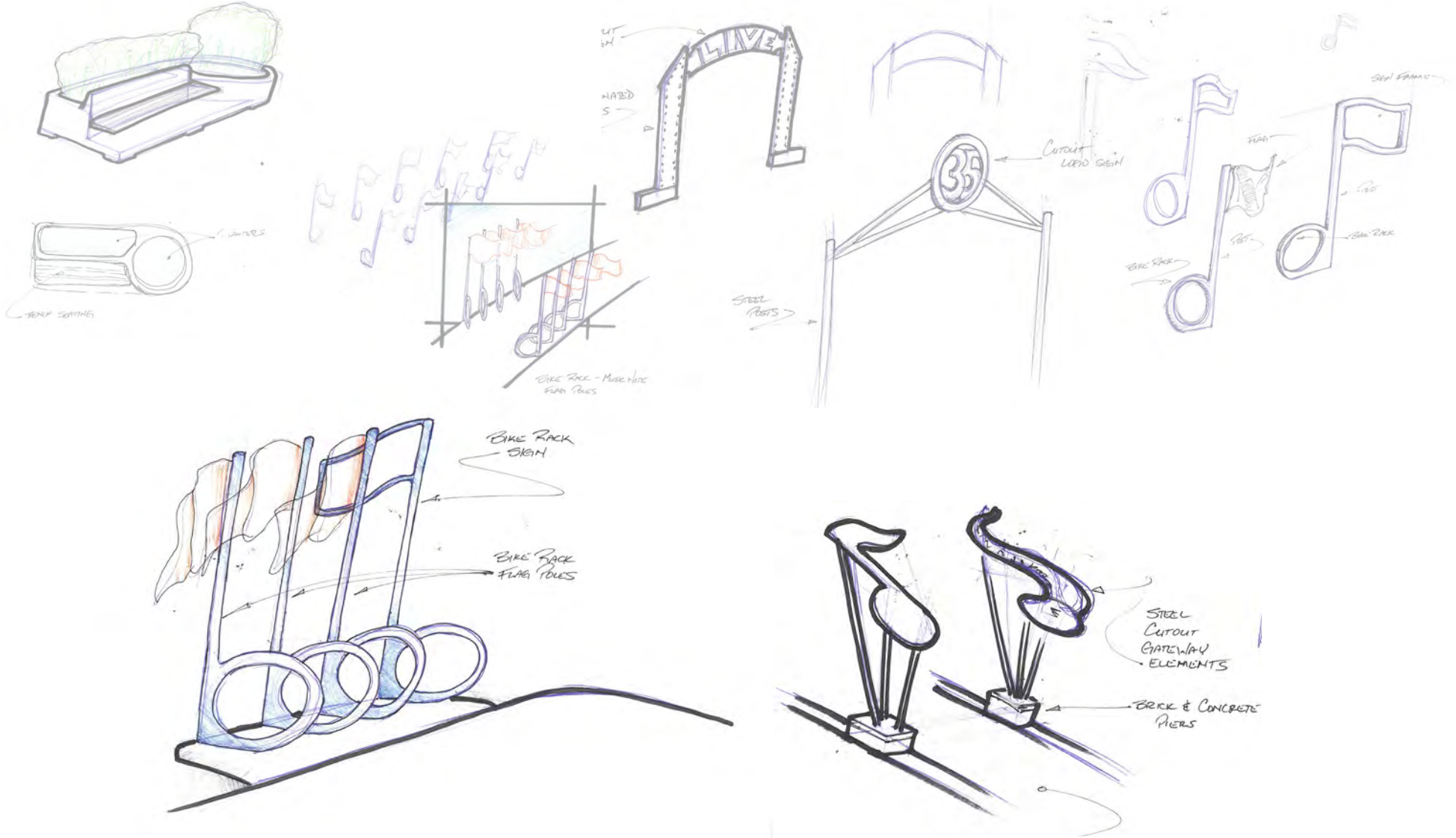


**Granby St. Gateway**

Photo by Google



## Sketch Ideas for gateways, bike racks, benches, planters



## Music note flag/bike racks

## Music note and saxophone public art gateway